Expatriate Services
A Literature Review/White Paper

Introduction

Today, almost every organization, large or small, is affected by global events and competition. Many US companies now sell their products abroad and often, the very products they sell are manufactured and/or assembled offshore. In today’s global arena, where old boundaries continue to dissolve, we're all competing in some fashion against products and services from international suppliers.

As a result, many of us compete directly. We have employees either traveling to or living and working in foreign countries, or both. Global business requires us to develop and maintain a highly competent and well prepared workforce. This is particularly true with regard to expatriates, because international assignments are not only important for business growth and income, they are also expensive. And, there is risk involved.

The one constant that HR professionals emphasize about international assignments is that they cost companies a great deal of money (HRM, 2011). Mercer (2008) reports that expatriate assignments cost between 1.5 to 4 times what a local employee costs. In short, they represent major investments, particularly when a move includes the family. These assignments are very challenging. The literature tells us that failure rates are high and costly to employees, in terms of family, relationships and career, and to companies, with regard to financial losses and personnel.

For this review, expatriates are defined as “employees who travel abroad (away from their home countries) and establish a residence for purposes of working in a host country” (Adler 1991). Repatriates are defined as “expatriates who are traveling back home again after their work assignment has ended” (Hodgetts and Luthans, 1997).

Using expatriates for 3-to-5 year offshore managing assignments became popular during the late 1940's. These early assignees were often "top" managers put in place to
direct an operation for an American multinational (Vilet, 2013). Unlike today, where the trend is to locate and train a "local" replacement as part of an assignment, early expats typically represented a steady flow of American executive site managers.

Given the current demands of rapid globalization and the need to build or expand on local markets to increase income, the goals and locations for expatriation have changed. Today, the emerging markets are the focus, and such locations often provide at least half, sometimes more, of a company's total income (Vilet, 2013). And, in order to promote a "local" identity and customer base, most organizations look to quickly fill their offshore jobs with "local" talent.

For this paper, we define globalization according to Hill (2005), as: the international process of increasing economic interdependence among countries; and, the main factors of this process are the cross-border flow of goods, services, capital and know-how. Globalization, according to Hill, can also be expressed at three specific levels: at the worldwide level, the level of a specific country, and, at the level of specific industry.

While in the past, our expatriates were often sent to comfortable locations (Paris, London, Rome), today we send them to much more difficult regions, sometimes without their families. Recently, many organizations focused their efforts on the more recognized emerging markets of China, Brazil, and India. But today, particularly for those in the energy sector, the new emerging markets have shifted to include remote regions in South and Eastern Asia, Africa, South and Central America, and the Middle East.

The literature also tells us that expatriate assignments have become shorter, more difficult, with greater challenges and expectations. In some regions, they've also become more dangerous. The goal(s) have also changed, with expatriates often expected to replace themselves with a local representative before departure. And, while the total number of expatriates appears to be dropping, costs (which includes failures) is on the rise.
The Purpose of this Review

When a company enters the global market, its best domestic strategies often lose their applicability. Many have learned the "hard way" that what worked to motivate sales, or employees in Cleveland had little carryover to a location in Uzbekistan. In short, the best domestic strategies are rarely the best international strategies. This metaphor fits expatriate assignments, as well. You will find from the literature, that any organization wishing to capitalize on today's global business opportunities needs to develop a good understanding of just what makes expatriate assignments successful. This paper, focusing on a review of the most recent and relevant information on the topic of expatriate success, is presented to organizations as a model to help them best prepare and manage an expatriate workforce and to increase the likelihood of their expatriate success.

From the literature, we learn that well-prepared expatriates and family are those who/
whose:

- Assignments are clear and supported by all
- Generally know what to expect when they arrive in-country
- Have an understanding of the host-country culture
- Can at least "communicate" with host nationals
- Know, or have some understanding of what the assignment means with respect to their loved one's career
- Next position determined and employee prepared for it well before repatriation
- Understand and are well-prepared for the "reverse" culture shock often experienced upon re-entry
- Know why the company is committed to repatriation as an integral component of the company's expatriation process

The literature is very direct and straightforward with regard to the benefit of involving not only spouses, but also entire families in pre-departure preparation. Why? Because it's
been known for more than thirty-years, that the number one reason for U.S. expatriate failures is directly related to family failures:

- The spouse’s or other family member’s inability to adjust
- The employee’s inability to adjust
- Expatriate’s personal or emotional immaturity
- Other family problems

Making certain that families understand and support their assignment is critical to assignment success. To reach this level of preparation and understanding, families need to be involved from the initial selection process. They also need to be involved in most pre-departure orientations and trainings. Having an assignment support service, often the company’s EAP, is another critical component. Assignment support begins as early as candidate selection, and from the literature we learn the importance of having professionals work with candidates and their families, both in helping them to make assignment decisions and in establishing positive relationships for on-going in-country support.

From the literature we discover the importance of repatriation to a company’s bottom line, and why it is vital to include repatriation preparation and orientation within a whole, integrated package. While many U.S. organizations continue to falsely view repatriation as a “non-event”, 23% of repatriated employees currently leave their company during the first year following return; 40% leave within three years. The loss to companies includes not only the expatriate’s international experience, but also years of training and mentoring, and professional education and development. Sadly, these employees often go to one’s competitors.

Despite these findings, the literature tells us that the majority of U.S. companies, including its multinationals, currently fail to provide adequate pre-departure training to their expatriates and families. While corporate representatives may yet be uncertain as to the value of extensive training and the provision of support to expatriates and their families, expatriates themselves are much more direct and positive of the value. This is
not surprising because they, the expatriates, are the ones being placed in new and often very challenging situations.

We also find that U.S. corporations, compared to others, continue to have disproportionately high rates of assignment failure. From the literature, we learn that these rates (based only on “early or premature” return) run from a low of 5 percent to extremes approaching 15 percent. More recent studies, as yet inconclusive, are beginning to look at expatriate performance and meeting or failing to meet business objectives. Findings in both areas point toward deficiencies in preparing our people to work offshore.

We find that many companies are simply unaware of either their costs or losses related to expatriates. While it may be difficult to capture, the real costs of expatriate assignments, once captured, are surprisingly high. And yet, the losses due to failed assignments are not the most serious problems that organizations face. The real costs may be the indirect costs of damaged relationships with host country managers, employees, and other nationals, perhaps even the host-country government, with local organizations, other companies, and worst of all, with customers.

The benchmark processes for thorough and integrated expatriation and repatriation are the Asia organizations and some Europeans. These organizations consider extensive orientation, cross-cultural training, language acquisition, family support, home country and in-country mentoring, and repatriation preparation and support to simply be their responsibility when sending employees and families offshore. They consider these investments “key” to their international business success.

One such European organization, NOKIA, is presented in your review to some depth. NOKIA is recognized as one of the top international performers worldwide, and it credits its international prowess to its expatriate assignment programming. This extensive undertaking encompasses efforts from candidate selection, evaluation, and preparation through repatriation. During the 1990’s, NOKIA’s international growth and business success were unmatched. Today, facing the challenge of new and highly competitive operating systems, NOKIA is retrenching (and considering a merger with a competitor)
to meet this challenge head-on. From NOKIA we learn that it has no interest in changing its commitment to its expatriates and families, and you’ll find this undertaking and commitment a part of its vision and values for conducting its global business.

**THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) OF A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO EXPATRIATION SERVICES**

**INTRODUCTION**

This review of the literature focuses on findings with respect to the business reasons for the implementation of proactive expatriate and repatriate preparation services. Like Adler (1991) we define expatriates as “employees who travel abroad (away from their home countries) and establish a residence for purposes of working in a host country”. Repatriates are simply “expatriates who are traveling back home again when their work assignment has ended” (Hodgetts and Luthans, 1997).

The literature provides us with insight into services above and beyond what many American corporations provide to their expatriate workforce and families. The larger U.S. companies, particularly multinationals, currently provide their expatriates with sufficient financial and administrative support, including legal and tax preparation, but little in the way of family support or support for non-administrative/non-legal issues or concerns (GMAC Global Relocation Survey 2005). More than one-half of U.S. companies doing business internationally fail to adequately prepare their people for offshore assignments (Ashmalla, 1998; Gomez & Fernandez, 2005). And, from the literature we learn that repatriation continues to be perceived by many U.S. companies as a non-issue. Yet, this is not an accurate reflection of what all organizations are doing, particularly non-U.S. multinationals.

In some regions of the world, Japan and China for example, culture dictates the importance of being adequately prepared for any new or challenging event, particularly one like taking on an expatriate assignment (Selmer 1998). Why? Because “losing face”
is not a viable option for either the company or the expatriate manager, and because there’s a potential for high rates of return, as well as losses. As such, it’s not unusual to hear of Japanese companies spending a full-year, or more, training their expatriate candidates and families for assignments. Chinese companies are very cautious as well, and from the literature, it appears that we will be hearing much more about this area of Chinese business in the near future (Selmer 2003). While anecdotal for this review, one only needs to have watched the events of the Beijing Olympics to appreciate what being prepared means to the Chinese.

Asian organizations spend a great deal of time and money providing training and support to prevent problems from arising in the non-administrative and/or non-legal areas (Shaffer, M., Ferzandi, L., Harrison, D., Gregersen, H., & Black, J.S., 2002). It’s rare, for example, to find expatriates representing Asian companies who cannot speak the host country language fluently. Most Japanese and Chinese organizations also believe that it’s important for their representatives to understand the history, politics, and governmental structure of the host country, and to be able to practice its business etiquette. Sending their workers offshore with clear, well established, and jointly accepted business goals and timelines, is simply a given in this part of the world. But, as you’ll see as we continue with this review, the benchmarks in this business come from a different region of the world.

From the onset, we determined that there are substantial findings as related to the challenges and issues to be addressed in successfully moving employees and families to offshore work locations and back home again after assignment completion. To assist us with this review, we developed the following set of questions to guide us through the literature.

- What non-administrative services are addressed in the literature; which are viewed as significant in supporting the business success of expatriates?
- Why are these services valuable?
- What benefits have been realized?
Who are the world benchmark companies and why are they benchmarks?

What areas need further study?

**THE SERVICES REVIEWED**

This review focuses on the non-administrative, non-financial, and non-legal areas of expatriate preparation. As discussed above, the administrative, financial and legal areas are generally well provided by both U.S. and other country multinationals, and many studies report they have found few, if any, problems in these areas.

As such, we limited our review to the areas of language preparation, cross-cultural training and education, spousal and family involvement in candidate selection and pre-departure activities, family and expatriate support (both pre-assignment and in-country), the recognition of spousal career and employment needs, mentorship and coaching, pre-assignment evaluation visits, and relocation leave and repatriation planning and support. All of these areas are fully discussed in the literature, and while few U.S. multinationals currently provide support to this level, a number of foreign organizations provide services to this degree and beyond. The benchmark companies in this area of business provide these services and programs as a component of their International Human Resources Group (IHR), and credit their efforts as a major reason for their organization’s international business success.

**THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPATRIATION**

Sadly, many multinationals appear to be unaware of just what these costs are, as PriceWaterhouse Coopers reported in their Human Resource Survey (2003): “42% of respondents were simply unable to quantify their actual costs as related to expatriate assignments.” And, in their publication, *Expatriate Health and Welfare: The Hidden Costs of Getting it Wrong*, Jeremijenko and Doig (2007) say, "simply put, while it may be difficult to capture the real costs of expatriate assignments, once captured, we find that they are surprisingly high."
Yet, while losses due to assignment failures are high, expatriation assignment costs related to early repatriation are not the most serious problems we face. The real costs can be the indirect costs of damaged relationships with host country managers, employees, other nationals, perhaps even the host-country government, with local organizations, other companies, and, worst of all, with customers (Dowling, Schuler & Welch 1994, Stone 1994, Forster 2000). Not to mention one’s market share. In a survey of United States, European and Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs), Tung (1982) found U.S. organizations have higher rates of expatriate failure, and attributed four reasons for this:

- The spouse’s inability to adjust
- The employee’s inability to adjust
- The employee’s personal or emotional immaturity
- Other family problems

Throughout the literature, the dissatisfaction of the family and its member’s inability to adjust to the host country culture continually surfaces as the top reason for assignment failures (Tung Brown, 2008). For U.S. expatriates (as well as others) the family has been found to be the most important factor contributing to expatriate success or failure (Tung, 1998; Gomez & Fernandez, 2005; Brown 2008) This variable becomes even more an issue for dual-career households (Minter, 2008, & Brown, 2008). An earlier study (Foster, 1997) noted that high levels of stress frequently accompany family adjustment problems, caused by strained relationships, unmet or unknown expectations, and local pressures (Brown, 2008).

Tung (1998) found that less than 40% of the companies that were studied had even interviewed the employee’s spouse. Yet, in the literature, we find that in-depth interviews with an expatriate’s spouse are extremely valuable in determining just how adaptable the family will be. And, while some questions are personal, having one’s EAP or Medical representative ask them is most appropriate, and helps screen out families
that are obvious misfits for an overseas assignment. The most important issues to review when screening the candidate's family are related to:

- The level of marital stability
- Responsibilities and concerns for aging parents
- Substance abuse on the part of anyone in the household
- Learning disabilities in a child
- Behavioral problems in teenagers
- The emotional stability of family members
- Strength of family ties to the community or to other family members not going overseas
- Strength of children's attachment to extracurricular activities.
- The family's cohesiveness

Ideally, according to Tung (1982), family members should also be interviewed to determine their levels of relational skills in self-orientation, others-orientation and perceptual-orientation.

And, the key variables a multinational must consider when selecting expatriate families are:

- The length of the assignment
- The necessary degree of integration by the expatriate into the host-country culture
- The degree of difference between U.S. culture and the host-country culture, and the willingness of the expatriate and family to master this new environment

Surprisingly, given the high costs related to expatriate failures and the higher likelihood of failure for U.S. expatriates and families vs. other multinationals, we learn from the literature that many U.S. organizations continue to make very expensive commitments with insufficient planning or preparation. For example, as early as the late 1970’s, research identified spousal “inability to adjust to the host country culture” as a major reason for expatriate failure. Yet, today, few U.S. multinationals provide either the
training or services to ameliorate this “identified” problem. And, many multinationals continue to disregard the spouse during the interview/selection process.

From the literature, we know that several characteristics have been identified as capable of determining an expatriate's expected level of success. These include:

- His/her job skills
- Motivation for the assignment
- Language skills and abilities
- Relational skills
- Family situation and the family members’ commitment to the assignment

Yet, for most organizations, technical competency continues to be used as the primary and “popular” criteria for selecting expatriate candidates. The technical skills of an employee are important, but other skills are just as important. For example, an expatriate is likely being more successful if he/she has effective communication skills, effective managerial skills, and administrative competencies. Put simply, strong relationships with host country managers, employees, and community representatives makes an expatriate more productive, and, much more effective. Conflict resolution skills are also an important ability for anyone working in this position. In order to succeed, the literature tells us that expatriates must also have a strong belief in their assignment and must believe, too, that the assignment will be advantageous to their career and to the company.

Global human resource managers need to learn about, understand, and be able to recognize the signs of potential failure in candidates for expatriate assignment. According to the work undertaken by Haile, Jones and Emmanuel (2010), most failures are related to poor candidate selection criteria, individual/family factors, in-country job factors, cultural factors, and pre-assignment training deficits. Without proper training
and support and a realistic pre-job preview, expatriates and their families will have a very hard time adjusting to their new surroundings (Amdreason, 2008).

A GMAC Global Relocation Study (2008) defied at least three significant challenges facing multinational corporations: finding suitable and appropriate candidates for their assignments; training and supporting employees and their families to complete their assignments; and, preparing and retraining expatriate employees and families once their assignment ends. The GMAC study also reveals the importance of openly discussing and orienting this group of employees with respect to their individual career prospects as related to their assignment and the company’s (or product) strategy before expatriation begins. In short, when they fully understand just where they “fit” within the company’s international strategy, they’re much more likely to be committed to these goals and successful on the job. This important expatriate pre-assignment preparation with respect to goals, strategies, and expectations also enables the family to better understand their assignment responsibilities and the commitment they’ve all made in accepting an offshore position. When management provides its expatriates with such important company information, develops specific goals and expectations, explains the employee’s role in goal attainment, develops career opportunities related to goal achievement, provides precise career goals and expectations, and is committed to the provision of necessary training, support and help for the employee and family, there is a high likelihood of assignment success (Wang, 2008).

Such a strategy is even more important now, because today’s expatriates and families are much more likely to be sent to far less stable locations than in past. And, while today’s economic picture is tenuous, it appears that the rate of expatriate assignments is not going to be reduced for many multinationals. The GMAC Relocation Study found that despite a slowing economy, 68% of the multinationals included in the study will continue to relocate employees at record levels (Deresky, 2011).
Reapatriation: An Integral Component of the Successful Expatriation Process

From our findings, the importance of retaining valued employees today is obvious. Most, if not all U.S. organizations have been downsized, right-sized, and reorganized to optimize the employee group that remains. And those who do remain should represent the best of the best with respect to our workforce. This group should also represent those whom we believe we can “count on” to achieve our corporate goals as we inch our way through the (hopefully) now ending global recession.

If our managers, supervisors, and technicians fail in their offshore assignments, our losses can be substantial. In addition, should our expatriates decide to leave the company after they are repatriated, we lose not only the money we’ve invested in their training and grooming (and, sometimes educating), we also lose the money we’ve spent in sending them abroad along with the valuable experience they’ve gained. In view of the risks assumed with expatriation, and realizing how important it is for the success of a company’s international business strategy, U.S. multinationals have, according to the literature, at least begun to show interest in knowing how to manage these risks.

What are these risks? According to a major study undertaken to identify losses (Global Relocation Trends Survey, GMAC 2005) on average 23% of U.S. expatriates once repatriated leave their companies during the first year of return; more than 40% leave their companies within three-years. In a recent study, more alarming numbers are reported; 38% of repatriates leave within one year of their return (Global Relocation Trends Survey, Brookfield 2010).

Simply sending managers abroad for an average three-year assignment costs companies more than $1.25 million dollars (Salton 2005). What’s the cost when we lose this knowledge, experience, years of training, and the personal and professional development we’ve invested in the employee? No one appears to be certain of exact figures, but such losses are, without doubt, considerable. During a time when companies must pay close attention to controlling costs and retaining talent to remain
competitive, this hemorrhaging of mobile personnel is a surprising instance of corporate self-neglect (REA, Partners in Transition 2009).

During the 1970’s, less than 20% of US companies provided pre-assignment training; by the 1980’s, only 25%; by the 1990’s, fewer than 40%; Today, it’s estimated that less than 50% of American corporations provide pre-departure training and assistance of any real substance. A 2006 survey (ERC Global Benchmarking Survey, 2006) reports that only 59% of those companies providing pre-assignment training offered any type of repatriation services. Of these, more than 80% of the respondents stated that “there was room for improvement”. The current literature on this topic indicates that there is significant room for improvement.

To be effective, repatriation services must be an integral part of a “complete” package:

- Retrofit/Ad Hoc efforts do not work.
- Successful companies incorporate repatriation into their “whole” expatriate package
- What occurs after a manager’s return is planned out when they began their assignment.

Our review also reveals the following:

- Repatriation may be the most difficult aspect of an international assignment;
- Expatriates, often selected for international assignments based on a successful employment history and their overall expertise, frequently become victims of “career regression” when they return;
- Repatriation presents culture shock for returning employees and families. The longer the international assignment, the greater the culture shock.
THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESSFUL REPATRIATION

From the literature we learn that many companies assume that the move back home will be relatively simple because the language is the employee’s own (his/her native language), the culture is one with which the employee and family are very familiar, and the home conditions are simply those that the employee and family left behind. Following this perspective, repatriates should be able to slip smoothly back into their old environments --- why should they, how could they require any significant support?

Yet, this simplistic view of repatriation ignores many important issues. Employee repatriation from a host country is a significant transition and complex process, even when the family may not have accompanied him/her on assignment. It involves issues similar to those encountered when the employee was first sent offshore (Engen, 1995; Swaak, 1997). Frequently, repatriates are returning home from a high-status position that provided them with a great deal of autonomy. Because of this, they often view their return assignment (if they’re fortunate enough to have one) as a return to a lower status position. Why? Because they’re accustomed to status and autonomy, and returning to a less highly profiled role within the parent organization may create a great deal of stress. What may appear to be a career opportunity for management, in the employee’s mind, can (and often does) appear to be a diminished role. In essence, repatriates can, and often do, feel that they’re no longer “special”. What management may view as a challenging position, can be viewed as a “boring” job when a returning employee sees himself/herself as being no different than fellow workers. Such was not the case when they worked abroad.
WHAT SOME COMPANIES DOING – THE BENCHMARKS TODAY

While it is becoming ever more important for U.S. companies, particularly its larger organizations, to become not just “global”, but “globally competent”, from the literature we learn that we continue to lag behind others in this extremely important area of management. For example, despite the wealth of research and information available on this topic, the majority of U.S. firms, including its multinationals, continue to overlook the critical area of “family” when selecting candidates, in establishing assignment goals and expectations, in providing pre-departure training and orientation, and in assuring that help, guidance, and support are available, both prior to departure and while on assignment. We also find that U.S. organizations continue to overlook the critical area of repatriation and repatriation planning. While current studies reference this finding, extreme caution appears to have been taken not to identify the participants by name. As such, it’s difficult to determine just “who is doing what today”.

In addition, only recently have human resource professionals and organizations begun to seriously think about foreign companies and multinationals with respect to this area of study. As such, we lack an overall perspective of just where our U.S. organizations fit with respect to the overall picture. Early exploration revealed that others, such as the Japanese, Western Europeans, and Australian multinationals, spent significantly more time preparing their expatriates for offshore assignments. These studies also indicated that this group realized lower rates of failure than U.S. companies, Yet, these studies involved small samples of organizations and nations and with small samples, we lose significance. That is, the number of foreign companies reviewed represented only a few such organizations, making the findings interesting, but lacking in significance due to construct. Simply put, we very much need to look at this area of research and to do so with much larger and representative comparisons.

Yet, significantly, from our review of the literature, we believe that two Finnish organizations, Nokia and Erikson, are the true benchmarks in this area of business and human resource planning and services. While we will describe the Nokia expatriation
process in detail, we refrain from a full report on Erikson, due to the similarities of the approach used by these organizations. A full report on Erikson is available to ConocoPhillips on a request basis.

THE NOKIA STORY

Nokia’s Process of Expatriation/Repatriation
Source: Repatriation as a Process
Master's Thesis: Ana Frandberg and Carolina Kjellman
Lulea University of Technology
International MBA Program – 2005

With its origins in paper and paper processing, Nokia is today a multinational organization operating in the mobile telecommunications industry. The company employs more than 50,000 workers in more than 130 countries. In 2003, Nokia’s sales totaled almost 7-billion Euro (Frandberg & Kjellman, 2003). This company’s largest markets include: the United States, the U.K., Germany, China, UAE, India, Italy, France, Brazil, and Spain. Nokia also has staff, including expatriates in more than 120 additional countries.

At Nokia, the key components of their expatriation and repatriation process are:

1. Task Clarity:
   - Clearly written, discussed, agreed upon job expectations;
   - Dates by when certain accomplishment(s) are expected;
   - Performance review dates are established in advance;
   - Expatriate is told what he/she can expect if/when the performance goals are met;

2. Mandatory career counseling that focuses on both the expatriate and the company

3. Formal cross-cultural and language training programs for the entire family:

4. Formal policies that cover the entire process from selection through repatriation

5. HR assists in finding a required sponsor/mentor for the expatriate
6. Employee/family support while on assignment
   - The focus is on maintaining a “balanced life”
   - The types of support services offered depend on both the location to which the expatriate and family are sent and the individual needs of the employee and his/her family (this can and often does include a full host of on-going family support services);

7. On-going, regular communication:
   - This is the responsibility of the manager or senior person in the home office who serves as a mentor/sponsor and sets a communication schedule according to policy.
   - Communication occurs at least monthly for the duration of the assignment
   - Visits back to the home office are encouraged and fully paid for;

8. Repatriation Planning and Support
   - Consultation and future job planning begin at least six months before return
   - HR and the expatriate’s mentor/sponsor collaborate regarding a “suitable” job for the expatriate upon return. This required search is not limited to the home office, but is often undertaken company-wide
   - A reduced work schedule is established for the repatriate during the first month of return
   - A repatriation debriefing is required including “what was learned during my assignment” and employee and family recommendations
   - Employee and family support for “reverse culture shock”

**Why has Nokia been singled out as a “benchmark” in this area?**

First, and foremost, Nokia’s expatriation/repatriation programming addresses all areas of interest and concern as developed by the literature. Of importance, this company defines its process as both expatriation/repatriation. It does not separate the two, but combines these processes, from the candidate selection process through expatriate/family debriefing as a single, integrated process.
Nokia also describes, in detail, its expatriation process and the goals for expatriation. This explanation is incorporated into its HR policies and procedures. From Nokia (SenGupta, 2009) we learn how the company’s HR policies, in general, reflect and clearly support the company’s direction and IHRM business goals: “At Nokia, the development of human resources is a serious business proposition which endeavors to delight its customers, motivate its employees, and increase the ability and flexibility of management to address specific IHRM needs and goals. Our HR managers are challenged with the task of providing all employees with the skills, cultures, atmospheres and processes necessary to meet the company’s business objectives”.

The chief reason for expatriation at Nokia is to enable “KEY” employees to gain international exposure and experience, to develop international managers, to transfer specific Nokia knowledge and information, to instill corporate culture and values, to develop “local” staff, and to have highly placed, competent staff in place in order to direct the company in becoming competitive in all “local” markets. In essence, discovering international business opportunities at Nokia are more than a business unit function, and very much involve the company’s IHRM group and its ability to help them to put the “right” people in place, and to train, support, and acculturate them to this goal.

What are the results of these efforts? From 1990 through 2000, Nokia is recognized as one of the most successful multinational organizations in the world (Mimoun, 2009). And, due to these strategies, Nokia has achieved such status in less than two decades. Simply one of the most successful businesses, worldwide, Nokia stepped up to preparing its expatriate (and, local and home country employees) to capture what it perceived as a “calculated global business opportunity” in 1990, and became the major player in the communications industry. Today, the company is recognized as holding almost 40 percent of the world market share in this area of business (Mimoun, 2009).
REFERENCES


O’Neil and Kramer, 1995


Shaffer, M., Ferzandi, L., Harrison, D., Gregersen, H., & Black, J.S. (2002). You can take it with you: individual differences and expatriate success, BRC Papers on Cross-Cultural Management, Hong Kong Baptist University, School of Business/Department of Research Paper.


**New References**


Mercer, 2012. International Assignment Survey 2008. Mercer's *International Assignments Survey 2008* shows that a majority of companies are unable to accurately calculate their ROI, with 71 percent describing the measurement of financial benefits with international assignments as a challenge. The primary reasons are a lack of appropriate measurement tools, decentralised data and time constraints.

http://www.expatica.com/hr/hr-careers/Measuring-the-cost-of-international-assignments_20691.html